

WASHINGTON, DC – Last night, Cong. Mike Quigley made the following statement on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives regarding funding for the F-22 fighter plane:

Mr. Speaker, I read this evening with interest the President of the United States has threatened to veto the Defense bill if the additional funding exists for F-22 fighter planes.

Mr. Speaker, the President is absolutely right. And the real problem today is that opportunity to vote against those unnecessary planes are not allowed in this rule. In the end we have to stop spending more and start spending smarter.

I was extremely disappointed to learn that the administration's recommendation to halt the F-22 program was overridden. 187 F-22 Raptor fighter jets are not enough? The Raptor has not even been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, our two largest military fronts.

While I am not an expert on defense procurement, our Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, is. So I tend to believe him when he said that the notion of not buying 60 more F-22s imperils the national security of the United States is ``completely nonsense."

We are far and away the most superior air force in the world. Why would we pour billions more into an area where we already dominate and continue to support an aircraft that is not suited to the current battlefields in which we fight? We have to invest in low-tech equipment such as unmanned drones, which are effective in those areas of conflict.

And always remember that every defense dollar spent to bolster an area where we already dominate is a dollar we don't have to spend to take care of our soldiers, strengthen our forces, and improve in areas where we may be vulnerable and our soldiers may be vulnerable.

Again, we have to simply stop spending more and start spending smarter. Our soldiers deserve it. The taxpayers deserve it.